



PRECOR WHITE PAPER

50 Trade Show Tips for Attendees and Exhibitors

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Whether you're going to your first trade show or your hundredth, it's absolutely necessary that you represent your company well and make a great impression.

Trade shows are prime opportunities for lead generation and networking, and you want to ensure that you walk away from the experience with a high return on investment. With that said, here are 50 useful tips and tricks to help you optimize your time and resources.



Start Off Strong

KNOW THE TRADE SHOW

This may seem obvious, but be sure to do your research on whatever trade show you're attending beforehand. Find out what the event's general schedule is like so you can plan your personal agenda accordingly. And although your own booth number has likely been

determined far in advance, it's good to know the map of where other booths are located and the general direction traffic will flow throughout the show.

RESEARCH OTHER COMPANIES

Find a list of the other companies that will be in attendance. Knowing which competitors are also exhibiting, and the specific products or services they offer, can help you establish a smart plan for your entire trade show experience.

Of course, you want to stand out more than your competitors. Develop a strategic approach to your trade show marketing efforts and draw more exposure to your brand. Then be prepared to talk to visitors about how your company's offerings differ from your competitors.

SET SPECIFIC GOALS

As with anything in life, you'll want to approach the trade show with clearly defined objectives, both at a business level and a personal level. Set goals that are measurable, timely, and precise, yet also realistic and attainable.

Broad goals such as enhancing company awareness and effectively promoting a new company message are good places to start. Also include quantifiable and logistical objectives like establishing a certain amount of qualified leads, generating a certain amount of revenue, or meeting a certain amount of new key clients.

PROMOTE LIKE CRAZY

Don't forget to build hype about your company making an appearance

at the upcoming trade show.

Many companies have teams devoted to organizing trade show exhibits, so you might have this part covered. But there is always more you can do – use your personal social media presence to post updates about your company being at the show, or use it to connect with other attendees.

BUDGET WISELY

Once again, larger companies have established rules for budgets, and a lot of times, every financial factor may be taken care of. This isn't always the case though, so it's important take into consideration all of your travel expenses, food, fees for setting up your booth, etc.

Also, be sure to save some extra money for emergencies or other unforeseen expenses that may spring up.

PLAN YOUR STAY

Depending on your work circumstances, you may be lucky enough to take some extra days off around the dates of the trade show. Use those additional days to have your own mini vacation.

Spending some free time in a different city is a perfect way to mentally prep before or recuperate after a busy trade show. A little beach time or a visit to the nearby snowy mountains is never a bad idea, so consider extending your stay if possible.

KNOW YOUR TRAVEL PLANS

Another seemingly no-brainer concept that can be forgotten: it's always smart to have your travel details memorized. Relying on technology to keep track of all your transportation and lodging details can turn out bad if your phone or tablet dies or gets lost.

Before you leave for the airport, make sure you have a physical copy of your entire itinerary. Also, having a mental (or actual) map of your surroundings for the next few days of the show will be very beneficial for getting around.

MAKE PLANS WITH INDUSTRY COLLEAGUES

Before the big show, reach out to key people you know who will be attending the trade show. It's important to re-establish your connections with those important, influential individuals within your industry that you may only see every few years.

Extend an invitation to meet up for dinner or catch up over a quick coffee break. By working them into your plans in advance, it shows that you're interested in keeping in touch and building your relationship.

GET PROPER TRAINING

Make sure that you and your colleagues are armed with the necessary know-how to handle any trade show situation.

From delivering successful product demonstrations to answering the millions of questions that can be asked, you want to make sure that you'll be on top of your game. If you haven't already done so, devote plenty of time to becoming knowledgeable about all aspects of your company.

Also, know how to read your booth visitors: being able to figure out their needs, mindsets, and personality types will help you be successful.

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Stay in Tip Top Shape

CATCH SOME ZZZZ'S

You want to be as on top of your game as possible, so try to get your full eight hours of sleep in each night during the trade show. The better rested you are, the better you will perform. If you're feeling fatigued, try to sneak away for a short power nap, or go to bed earlier than you did the night before.

GET SOME EXERCISE IN

It can be tough during trade shows to find time or space to exercise, but it is so important that you make time to do so – exercising regularly will keep you feeling refreshed and recharged throughout the duration of the show.

Consider walking between your hotel to the trade show location, or take an early morning or late night run. If you're unable to leave the trade show floor, try doing some laps around the room or find a quiet corner

to do a series of crunches, planks, or whatever other exercises you can find space for.

WEAR COMFY SHOES

Trade shows involve long hours of standing and walking around, so you'll want to make sure that you wear (or have on hand) comfortable shoes that won't leave your feet aching 10 hours later.

You don't necessarily have to sacrifice the fashion or professional aspect either – invest in some cushiony insoles or custom orthotic inserts to put in the work shoes you normally wear to provide your feet with the comfort they need on those long days.

GET OUT AND EXPLORE

When you're in a different city for the trade show, use some of your free time to go on adventures around the city. Seeing new sites and getting some fresh air while going out and about is a great way to stay invigorated.

Take up the opportunity to explore different cultures: check out the diverse communities within the city, go to a museum or take in a ballet show if time allows, and dine at restaurants that are unique to the area. Have fun in your (albeit precious) off time!

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Fuel Up Wisely

HEALTHY MEALTIME CHOICES

Depending on the type of trade show you're going to, the food selections at any provided meals may differ greatly. We'd like to think that all trade shows provide their exhibitors with healthy choices, but that's not always the case.

Given the options at your trade show meals, try to load up on as many fruits and veggies as you can, in addition to lean proteins like fish, chicken, and turkey. These foods will keep you fuller (and more awake) longer than processed foods loaded with sugars, carbs, and fat.

BOOTH SNACKING

During a long day spent at your trade show booth, it can be easy to turn to convenience foods that are simple to carry with you and eat. Rather than giving in to the chips, fast food, and soda, pack nutritional foods in your bag.

Again, fruits and veggies are always a big hit, and they're portable – think apples, bananas, carrot and celery sticks with hummus. Moreover, making a trail mix with dried fruit and nuts can give you the energy boost you need. If you're opting for a quick sandwich, get one that's made with 100 percent whole wheat bread and turkey, with little or no cheese and mayo, and lots of vegetables.

Water is always a good drink of choice, too – make it your goal to drink at least 64 ounces of water per day.

AVOID HEADACHES

Speaking of drinking, alcohol is always a tricky factor when it comes to business-social situations. You don't want to make a fool of yourself in front of potential clients, important bosses, and coworkers.

Be aware of what kinds of drinks are appropriate under which circumstances, and limit yourself to one drink (no matter how high of a tolerance you think you have). If you're not sure whether you should be drinking at the gathering or not, be wise and stick with a non-alcoholic beverage. And again, don't forget to down lots of water!



Prim and Proper Etiquette

DRESS TO IMPRESS

When you are representing your company at a trade show, it's best

that you dress professionally so as to make good impressions on those you interact with. Some companies have required dress codes for employees who travel to trade shows, and others simply let you dress how you think is best.

At the very least, you should dress in business casual attire, but business professional clothing is highly respectable and more tasteful. Some trade shows have formal events, so don't forget to pack that tuxedo or gown along.

BE WELL-GROOMED

A nice appearance also involves having good hygiene and being well-groomed.

Make sure your hair is clean and styled. Ladies: makeup shouldn't be over-the-top; keep it natural and professional. Guys: if you have facial hair, keep it trimmed. Smelling good is essential, but be mindful of those with sensitivities to strong scents. Stick with mild deodorants, perfumes, and colognes. Accessorize with cuff links, sophisticated jewelry, or a scarf to add an extra spark to your outfit. Carry mints with you to ensure fresh breath.

WEAR YOUR BADGE

It's easy to forget about, but that name badge is incredibly important to always be wearing at the trade show. This is not something you want to forget in the hotel room - often times, it's your pass to the trade show floor!

It's also a great way for others to learn your name. If you have the option of which side to place your name badge (versus it being on a lanyard), opt for putting it on the right side of your chest. This way, it will stick out more and be more visible when you go to shake hands with someone.

CONFIDENCE THROUGH BODY LANGUAGE

People can tell a lot from how you're standing or how you're looking at them, and you want to make sure that you're approachable.

It's important that you sit or stand up straight, relax your shoulders, and don't cross your arms or legs, which may come across as guarded or defensive. Make consistent eye contact (although don't stare - that may creep people out) and keep your head up.

Engage with the people you're talking to by smiling, laughing, and/or nodding at what they're saying. Most of all, keep a positive attitude, because that will come across through your body language.

TECHNOLOGY ETIQUETTE

While you may need to actively use your phone, tablet, or computer for business reasons, remember to keep your access to them just that - strictly business.

During downtime, it can be tempting to surf the web or scroll through your Facebook newsfeed, but this is unprofessional and not conducive to having a strong booth presence. Keep that phone on silent, and if you absolutely need to make a phone call, find a private place to do so.

STAY MOTIVATED THE WHOLE TIME

When you're on the trade show floor for days on end, it can be tricky to keep a consistent, energetic stamina from the start of day one to the final minute of the last day.

In order to ensure a quality experience for all those you interact with, find incentives, whether internally or with coworkers, that will keep you motivated to represent your company well. If it's exceeding your personal and company goals or holding a contest between booth staff, find a way to keep trade show morale up.



Business at the Booth

EFFECTIVE BOOTH LAYOUT

Booth layout is one of the many keys to a successful trade show experience: you want to have an appealing and effective booth layout that will draw others in and place them right in front of your products. Take the minimalist approach and have a simplified design and message focused on showcasing your newest or best-selling products. Too much clutter can be a turn-off to attendees, and can limit your exposure and access to communicating with others. Additionally, make your booth comfortable and inviting by having comfy carpet and quiet places for attendees to relax and talk business at.

HAVE FRESH MATERIALS

Utilize marketing materials that are sophisticated, catchy, and up-to-date. You don't want to have people tossing your handouts because they are too dull to read, so aim for informational materials that people will want to hold on to and show others.

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Promotional items offer your company a way to expand its presence. Yet who really wants another click-y pen that's probably not going to work?

Choose wisely and have booth freebies that are relevant to your company and industry. Tasteful yet exciting items will resonate well with attendees.

STAY CONNECTED

Internet may or may not be readily available at the trade show location, and even if it is, there's no guarantee that you will be able to be connected the whole time.

Consider having your company invest in a wireless hotspot device that will allow you to keep your booth's laptops and tablets connected to the web at all times.

MAXIMIZE ROI

Trade shows are a big commitment, requiring money, manpower, and additional valuable resources. As always, you want to make sure that you're getting the most bang for your buck.

Maximize your booth's ROI through the use of a strategic plan that spans from before to after the trade show and targets the right prospects who will generate significant leads. Return on investment is simple to calculate, and what you learn from it can have significant impacts on future actions of your company.

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Personal Professional Practices

KNOW THE AGENDA

Most trade shows provide exhibitors with copies of the event schedule. These can be quickly lost or forgotten about, so it's best to print out a trade show agenda beforehand to have ready for easy reference.

Also make sure that you have a printed copy of your personal agenda, containing the dates, times, and contact information for people you are scheduled to meet with. In case your phone or tablet dies or the internet connection is non-existent, you want to make sure that you have this information on hand.

SCHEDULE AND KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENTS

At most trade shows, there's a lot to see – and there are plenty of stories for the media to cover (including the products of your competitors).

Your best bet is to get out in front and schedule appointments ahead of the show, including interviews at your booth. And once your

appointments are set, try your best to stay on track. Cancellations make bad impressions.

If you're simply an attendee at the show, reach out to other attendees and make time in your schedule to network.

BE ORGANIZED

We cannot stress enough the importance of being organized. The last thing you need is an act (or even worse, multiple acts) of disorganization keeping you from putting your best foot forward at the trade show.

Carry a folder or binder containing any necessary documents (such as your schedule, phone numbers, to-do checklists, marketing materials, and business cards) you may need throughout the trade show. Avoid disorder at the booth as well.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF POWERPOINT

Chances are that if you're going to be giving a presentation at a trade show event, you're probably a pretty good public speaker. Yet there are a few general tips that everyone can benefit from when it comes to the actual presentation itself – no matter how many times you've heard them.

It's best to keep your slides simple: easy-to-read color combinations, little text, and minimal animations. Keep your audience members in mind. Don't just stand there and read slide after slide to them.

PROMOTE YOURSELF

Always be sure to have business cards on you at the trade show and outside of the trade show, and be mindful about how you hand them out.

Only give your business card to people who you've established a strong, quality connection with, instead of every single person you bump into.

Additionally, strive to get business cards from those you interact with; this way, you're guaranteed to have their contact information on hand and can easily follow up with them. (Keep in mind that some cultures, such as the Japanese, have differing business card etiquette.)

TAKE NOTES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Each and every day, take notes of how things are progressing at your booth.

Are certain ways of talking to people more efficient than others? Are the questions attendees ask important points of concern that your company should address? What can you do differently so that tomorrow is any even more successful day? Who did you talk to and need to follow up with?

Capturing your thoughts throughout the day will make the future a whole lot easier than trying to look back and remember what you were thinking.

DELIVER ON YOUR PROMISES

You talk to a lot of people at trade shows. Networking happens easily, and you often end up promising to send your new connections a certain file or the contact information about a colleague.

Rather than letting your "must-send" list snowball out of control (and risk losing those new contacts), stay on top of your game by making a list of your to-do's throughout the day and then sending out those promised correspondences later that night.

ENTER THOSE RECEIPTS

Be smart about tracking your expenses! Instead of ending up with a

pocketful of crumpled receipts at the end of your trade show (or worse yet, losing them), be better organized.

We suggest entering in the required information onto your expense reports each night before you go to bed. Next, take a picture on your phone of each receipt, and then from there you're free to hang on to or toss them. This way, if need be, you've got the photo proof of the money you've spent, and you're not stuck with carrying receipts around for the rest of eternity.



HAVE A GENERAL SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN

Are you going to tweet from every session you go to? Are you going to post every photo you take to Facebook and Instagram? Are you going to

Build the Buzz with Social Media

BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA AT A TRADE SHOW: IT'S ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Trade shows can be a fantastic place to accomplish some, if not all, of the following:

- Grow your social following - both people and businesses are looking to engage with you, and the same goes for your online presence before, during, and after the show
- Connect with professionals in your industry
- Generate leads

connect via LinkedIn with every person you speak to?

Social media can be time-consuming, and depending on why you're at a specific trade show, it can either enhance or take away from your experience. Be prepared and decide how much time you're going to devote to social before the show.

CONNECT ON LINKEDIN

You don't have to connect with every living soul you meet at a trade show.

However, when you do meet someone you'd like to keep in touch with, go ahead and send them a request to connect (whether it's during or after the show). Another great strategy for networking is to join trade show LinkedIn groups beforehand, when available. This will give you the chance to introduce yourself, ask questions, and make plans to meet-up at the show.

#HASHTAG IT UP

Don't use a million hashtags in your tweets. But do use the official trade show hashtag.

You can usually find a trade show's hashtag pretty easily these days, whether it's plastered on welcome banners or displayed on TV screens throughout the event. Once you identify the hashtag, use it in your tweets from the trade show. For instance, you could tweet using the hashtag:

- In sessions (some trade shows will even give hashtags to each individual session)
- To promote your company's booth: The exhibits here at #CES2014

are opening soon! Stay tuned for news from the show & if you're in Vegas visit us at booth 26923

- In an effort to make new connections: Anyone interested in fitness technology want to meet up for lunch? #CES2014

EMPLOYEES USING SOCIAL MEDIA

If you're representing your employer at a trade show while also using social media, make sure to present yourself in the best light.

Unless you have privacy settings on your profiles set up correctly, remember that everything you've posted in the past is public. We're talking Facebook posts, tweets, Instagram photos, etc. This means if you use your social accounts strictly on a personal level, you shouldn't suddenly use them professionally at a trade show.



Shape Up Your People Skills

BEING A GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKER

Having excellent communicative skills is a bonus in any situation.

It conveys confidence and is an efficient way of delivering important messages to groups of any size. When speaking with others, make the conversation engaging, inviting, and natural. Ask and answer questions, use gestures, and have a strong, clear voice.

NETWORKING, NETWORKING, NETWORKING

One of the main reasons that you're at the trade show is so that you can build your network of professional connections.

Confidently approach people and strike up a conversation about the trade show, their business, or anything really! Ask easy questions to find out more about them and establish a real connection with them. Share about yourself and why you are passionate about your company or industry. Try to find something that the two of you have in common.

INTROVERTED? NO PROBLEM!

Perhaps you're not confident walking up to strangers and being assertive. If you're more on the shy side, as many people are, that's okay! There are ways that you can still be an expert networker.

Try playing up your strengths. If you're a great listener (which most introverts tend to be), use that to your benefit and ask your new connection a riveting question. If addressing large crowds isn't your thing, have one-on-one conversations.

Don't be afraid to push yourself past your comfort zone; you'll be surprised at how rewarding it can be when building your professional network.

AVOID CULTURE SHOCK

If you've worked internationally in the past, you are aware that business practices vary in different cultures. Researching and knowing what the

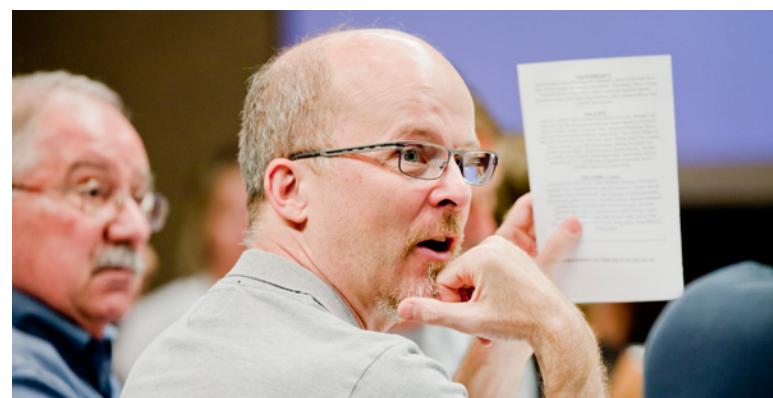
audience's unique cultural backgrounds are will help you avoid awkward situations or doing things that may be considered offensive.

Be mindful of your communication style, body language, and the attendees' basic needs. Respect cultural differences, and you will be able to work well together with others.

FORM QUALITY CONNECTIONS

When it comes to networking, keep in mind: quality over quantity.

Rather than talking to a bunch of people but not truly getting to know them, form solid bonds with those you network with, and make it a point to talk to them again when you can. Building strong, quality connections will be mutually beneficial to you, your company, and others in the long run.



Wrapping It Up

FOLLOW UP

You've heard it before and we will say it again - it's important that you

follow up with the connections that you made at the trade show. These new contacts are not only valuable leads or business associations to have, but they could prove to be lifelong company friends as well.

Stay in touch often through email or phone correspondence, and watch your business relationship grow.

REFLECT

Hold a meeting (or several) to recap how the trade show went.

Go through the notes that you took during the event (like we suggested earlier), and get honest feedback from all of your company's trade show attendees, as well as those who kept up with the event through different platforms, such as social media.

This is a great way to discuss what things went well and what things didn't. From all of the insight your company gathers, you'll be able to get a picture of what can be changed for future events. Make sure that all of the feedback gets documented so you have it on file, and maybe even give a presentation of what you learned at the trade show to the rest of your team.

START PLANNING AHEAD

Speaking of future events, now is as good a time as any to start planning for next year's trade show.

Although you may not necessarily be able to reserve a spot for next year's show right after this year's is over, you can at least begin forming a rough outline of the steps required to make next year's show an absolute success.

Take the feedback you gathered during your recap meeting(s) into consideration, and brainstorm for exciting new possibilities.

MAKE GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR

Goals, goals, goals. They are so imperative to have! Get a head start on next year's trade show by taking the time to list some goals out. Aim for even stronger goals than this year's, and push your colleagues to do the same.

This will give you and the rest of your company something to look forward to and work toward consistently throughout the year.

TREAT YOURSELF

Celebrate a job well done!

Reaching your goals is a big deal, so reward yourself and your coworkers for their accomplishments at the trade show. Have a lunch out or grab a few drinks. Be proud of what you have done to help your career and company.

For more information, please visit www.precor.com or call 800.786.8404.